

Chapter No. 2235

16/SS26/R1198

Qj / thnc

***SENATE
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
No. 652***

Originated in Senate

Liz Welch

Secretary

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 652

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION MOURNING THE PASSING OF MISSISSIPPI VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY CIVIL RIGHTS PIONEER JOHN JAMES, JR., AND EXTENDING THE CONDOLENCES OF THE LEGISLATURE TO HIS BEREAVED FAMILY.

WHEREAS, John A. James, Jr., 96, one of Mississippi Valley State University's first faculty members, passed away March 21, 2016; and

WHEREAS, James was remembered as an integral part of Mississippi Valley State University's history. The school was still Mississippi Vocational College when James was recruited by the school's first President, James White, to head the Science and Mathematics Department in 1951; and

WHEREAS, James remained at the school until his retirement in 1992. In that time, he also served as Director of the University's Office of Institutional Research; and

WHEREAS, Senator David Jordan said James was deeply and personally committed to the success of his students, especially those who were taking classes while working. James went so far as

to specially schedule summer courses for students whose work commitments prevented them from taking a full courseload so that they could graduate on schedule; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Roy Hudson, former Vice President and Interim President at MVSU, said they were classmates from junior high through college and were very close friends. "Mr. James was and will always be a legend at Valley," said Hudson; and

WHEREAS, born March 3, 1920, to Johnnie James and Lois Bilbo-James in Pascagoula. James graduated as Valedictorian of his junior high school class. At the time, there was no high school open to blacks in Pascagoula. He graduated from Randolph High School in Pass Christian in 1940, and attended Alcorn State University from 1940 until 1942; and

WHEREAS, James was an Army Veteran of World War II and was honorably discharged in 1946, and he enrolled at Tennessee State University in Nashville, from which he received bachelor's and master's degrees; and

WHEREAS, outside of his work at MVSU, James was heavily involved in his community. He was part of a three-person committee that acquired the former Leflore County Training School to repurpose it as the L.T. Brazil Community Center. James also chaired the Delta Authority Board for the Delta Correctional Facility and was Treasurer of the Leflore County Democratic Executive Committee from 1994 until 2007; and

WHEREAS, James was a member of New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church from the time that he moved to Itta Bena, where he served as a Deacon, Trustee and Financial Clerk; and

WHEREAS, James is survived by his wife, Irene, whom he wed on October 17, 1942, before he was drafted into the Army during World War II. The couple had five sons; and

WHEREAS, it is with sadness that we note the passing of a Mississippi professional educator who was a mentor to his students and colleagues and a wonderful example of citizenship in Mississippi:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby mourn the passing of Mississippi Valley State University Civil Rights Pioneer John James, Jr., and extend the condolences of the Legislature to his bereaved family.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this resolution be presented to the surviving family of John James, Jr., forwarded to the President of Mississippi Valley State University and the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, and be made available to the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
April 1, 2016



PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
April 7, 2016



SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES